

National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

Brief of Accident

Adopted 10/05/2006

DCA97MA058 File No. 20688	08/06/1997	NIMITZ HILL, GU	Aircraft Reg No. H7468	Time (Local): 01:42 YDT		
Make/Model:	Boeing / 747-300			Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model:	P&W / JT9D-7R4G2		Crew	16	0	0
Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed		Pass	209	29	0
Number of Engines:	4					
Operating Certificate(s):	Foreign Operation					
Name of Carrier:	KOREAN AIRLINES LTD					
Type of Flight Operation:	Scheduled; International; Passenger/Cargo					
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 129: Foreign					
Last Depart. Point:	SEOUL			Condition of Light:	Night/Dark	
Destination:	AGANA, GU			Weather Info Src:	Weather Observation Facility	
Airport Proximity:	Off Airport/Airstrip			Basic Weather:	Instrument Conditions	
				Lowest Ceiling:	2500 Ft. AGL, Broken	
				Visibility:	4.00 SM	
				Wind Dir/Speed:	090 / 006 Kts	
				Temperature (°C):	27	
				Precip/Obscuration:	Rain Showers	
Pilot-in-Command	Age:			Flight Time (Hours)		
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)				Total All Aircraft:	Unk/Nr	
Airline Transport; Multi-engine Land				Last 90 Days:	Unk/Nr	
Instrument Ratings				Total Make/Model:	Unk/Nr	
Airplane				Total Instrument Time:	UnK/Nr	

The Board's full report is available at <http://www/ntsb.gov/publictn/publictn.htm>, AAR-00/01, PB00-910401.

On August 6, 1997, about 0142:26 Guam local time, Korean Air flight 801, a Boeing 747-3B5B (747-300), Korean registration HL7468, operated by Korean Air Company, Ltd., crashed at Nimitz Hill, Guam. Flight 801 departed from Kimpo International Airport, Seoul, Korea, with 2 pilots, 1 flight engineer, 14 flight attendants, and 237 passengers on board. The airplane had been cleared to land on runway 6 Left at A.B. Won Guam International Airport, Agana, Guam, and crashed into high terrain about 3 miles southwest of the airport. Of the 254 persons on board, 228 were killed, and 23 passengers and 3 flight attendants survived the accident with serious injuries. The airplane was destroyed by impact forces and postcrash fire. Flight 801 was operating in U.S. airspace as a regularly scheduled international passenger service flight under the convention on International Civil Aviation and the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1239 and was on an instrument flight rules flight plan.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

DCA97MA058	08/06/1997	NIMITZ HILL, GU	Aircraft Reg No. H7468	Time (Local): 01:42 YDT
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Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - FAF/OUTER MARKER TO THRESHOLD (IFR)

Findings

1. LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
2. (C) IFR PROCEDURE - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) FATIGUE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) INADEQUATE TRAINING - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
6. (F) RADAR,MSAW - INOPERATIVE
7. (C) MONITORING - INADEQUATE - COPILOT/SECOND PILOT
8. (C) MONITORING - INADEQUATE - FLIGHT ENGINEER

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - FAF/OUTER MARKER TO THRESHOLD (IFR)

Findings

9. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

10. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.
the captain's failure to adequately brief and execute the nonprecision approach and the first officer's and flight engineer's failure to effectively monitor and cross-check the captain's execution of the approach. Contributing to these failures were the captain's fatigue and Korean Airs inadequate flight crew training. Contributing to the accident was the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) intentional inhibition of the minimum safe altitude warning system (MSAW) at Guam and the agency's failure to adequately manage the system.